## UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

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FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT AWARDED FOR INTERIOR DEPARTMENT FISHERY RESEARCH VESSEL BEARING NAME OF NOTED OCEANOGRAPHER

A \$1,049,935 contract for construction of the Townsend Cromwell, the Department of the Interior's new combination fishery-oceanographic research vessel, has been awarded to the McDermott Shipyard of Morgan City, La., the Department announced today. The vessel, to be completed in about a year, will be based in Honolulu and will be operated by the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries, Fish and Wildlife Service.

The vessel is named for the late Townsend Cromwell, a Bureau of Commercial Fisheries oceanographer who discovered what is now known as the Cromwell Current in the Pacific Ocean. This current may be compared to a subsurface river flowing eastward along the Equator.

The Townsend Cromwell will be 158 feet six inches long and will have a beam of 33 feet. It will have a bulbous bow with viewing ports to permit underwater observation of fish and the use of cameras to record the behavior of fish for further study.

Shallow draft of the research craft will permit the investigation of coastal areas for tuna bait fish resources. It will carry a variety of winches and other equipment for standard oceanographic work on currents, temperature, and other properties of the sea. A chemical laboratory will facilitate the completion of analysis aboard ship. Other equipment will permit a variety of experimental fishing methods, including the use of long lines, midwater trawls, gillnets, and live bait.

Its two engines, with variable pitch propellers, will permit the wide range of speed necessary for fishery and oceanographic research. Speed can be reduced and maintained at half a knot for plankton net trawling or it can be increased as desired to a 12-knot cruising speed. The vessel will have a range of about 10,000 miles.

The Cromwell Current, which has an estimated volume about 500 times that of the Mississippi River, was discovered in 1952 when Mr. Cromwell and others noted that drift buoys with deep drag moved in an opposite direction from those that were strictly surface buoys. The current's core is about 330 feet below the surface and its speed is approximately three knots.

Mr. Cromwell, a native of Boston, Mass., was killed in 1958 in an airplane crash in Mexico.